

senior citizens and their families. They deserve a prescription drug benefit under Medicare. And we should try to provide it in a way that strengthens the promise of Medicare, not in a way that breaks that promise and breaks faith with the elderly.

The differences between Vice President GORE and Governor Bush on this issue are fundamental. Governor Bush stands with the big drug companies. The Vice President stands with the senior citizens. Governor Bush has sought at every turn to blur the differences between their two plans in a way that is so misleading as to make a mockery of his own attacks on the Vice President's credibility.

Vice President GORE has clearly pointed out the many flaws in Governor Bush's prescription drug plan for senior citizens. But Governor Bush has no response on the merits. Instead, he hides behind phrases like "fuzzy numbers" and "scare tactics."

But the numbers are not fuzzy, and senior citizens should be concerned. Let's look at the facts.

Prescription drug coverage under the Bush plan is not immediate and most senior citizens would be left out.

As the Vice President has pointed out, for the first 4 years, the Bush plan would cover low-income seniors only. AL GORE cited the example of a senior citizen named George McKinney. He said:

George McKinney is 70 years old, has high blood pressure. His wife has heart trouble. They have an income of \$25,000 a year. They cannot pay for their prescription drugs. And so they're some of the ones that go to Canada regularly in order to get their prescription drugs.

Governor Bush responded:

Under my plan, the man gets immediate help with prescription drugs. It's called immediate helping hand. Instead of squabbling and finger-pointing, he gets immediate help.

He kept accusing Vice President GORE of using "fuzzy math" and "scare tactics."

But Governor Bush's own announcement of his Medicare plan proves AL GORE's point. This is what Governor Bush said:

For four years, during the transition to better Medicare coverage, we will provide \$12 billion a year in direct aid to low income seniors . . . Every senior with an income less than \$11,300-\$15,200 for a couple—will have the entire cost of their prescription drugs covered. For seniors with incomes less than \$14,600-\$19,700 for couples—there will be a partial subsidy.

George McKinney has an income of \$25,000. He would clearly be ineligible for help under Governor Bush's plan. If Governor Bush thinks that is fuzzy math, then education reform is even more urgent than any of us realized.

In the third debate, Governor Bush finally admitted that the first phase of his program is only for "poor seniors."

George McKinney is not alone. The vast majority of senior citizens would not qualify for Governor Bush's prescription drug plan, and many of those who did qualify would not participate.

Even this limited program for low-income seniors would not be immediate, because every State in the country would have to pass new laws and put the program in place, a process that would take years in many States.

George Bush's prescription for middle-income seniors is clear—take an aspirin and call your HMO in 4 years.

Governor Bush's prescription drug plan would also require senior citizens to go to an HMO or an insurance company to obtain their coverage. In the first debate, Vice President GORE pointed out that most senior citizens "would not get one penny for four to five years, and then they would be forced to go into an HMO or an insurance company and ask them for coverage. But there would be no limit on the premiums or deductibles or any of the terms or conditions."

Again, Governor Bush did not respond to the Vice President's specific points. Instead, he claimed that the Vice President was trying to "scare" voters.

The facts are clear. George W. Bush's policy paper states that:

Each health insurer, including HCFA-sponsored plans that wish to participate . . . will have to offer an "expanded" benefit package, including out-patient prescription drugs. . . . This will give seniors the opportunity to select the plan that best fits their health needs.

In other words, to get prescription drug coverage under the Bush plan, you have to get it through a private insurance plan. How high will the copayments be? How high will the premiums be? How high will the deductible be? Governor Bush has no answer. Those important points are all left up to the private insurance companies.

Governor Bush says senior citizens will have the opportunity to select the plan that best meets their health needs. But what they will really have is the opportunity to select whatever plan private insurers choose to offer. If it costs too much, senior citizens are out of luck. If it does not cover the drugs their doctors prescribe, they are out of luck. The Bush plan is an insurance industry's dream, and a senior citizen's nightmare.

On prescription drugs, and every other aspect of Medicare, the choice between the two Presidential candidates is very clear, and it is clear on every other aspect of health care. The Bush record in Texas is one of indifference and ineptitude—of putting powerful interests ahead of ordinary families.

The Bush record in the campaign is one of distortion. The Bush proposals are at best inadequate and at worst harmful. Tax cuts for the wealthy are not as important as health care for children and prescription drugs for seniors. The American people understand that, but evidently Governor Bush does not.

AL GORE has a career-long record of fighting for good health care for families, for children, and for senior citi-

zens. The current administration has a solid record of bipartisan accomplishment, ranging from protecting the solvency of Medicare to improving health insurance coverage through the enactment of the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill and the Child Health Insurance Program. AL GORE's program responds to the real needs of the American people with real resources and a detailed action plan.

I am hopeful that every American will examine the records of the two candidates carefully. On health care, there should be no question as to which candidate stands with the powerful special interests and which candidate stands with the American people. The choice is clear. Governor Bush stands with the powerful, and AL GORE stands with the people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.  
Mrs. HUTCHISON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAPO). The Senator from Texas.

#### SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise today to refute everything the Senator from Massachusetts has said about my State and my Governor.

Mr. President, I think it is legitimate to talk about a person's record when you are running for President of the United States. But, Mr. President, I object to the use of the Senate floor to trash my State of Texas. And I object to a misrepresentation of the record of my State.

Mr. KENNEDY. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I will yield on your time—on the time of the Senator from Massachusetts, not on my 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts has no time.

Mr. KENNEDY. But there is not a time limitation, is there?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is under a time limitation.

Mr. KENNEDY. I ask my response not be charged to the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, does the Senator from Texas deny that Texas is 48th out of 50 States in terms of the total number of uninsured children? Does she deny that?

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I deny that that is the relevant point. Because, in fact, 41 States are behind in the CHIP program sign-up because when Congress passed the Children's Health Care Program, they gave the States 3 years to spend the money. It just happened that our State meets every other year in the legislature. By the time they were able to meet and start the CHIP program, the State had had a very steady influx of children. We are on the way, and 40 other States are in the same situation.

So I am going to reclaim my time. I would like for the rest of my 15 minutes to start now because I thought the

Senator from Massachusetts was going to ask a question. But I am not going to yield further.

The Senator from Massachusetts has been speaking for quite awhile about my home State of Texas. If there is more than 15 minutes before we start the foreign operations bill, I ask unanimous consent to be able to continue speaking until Senator McCONNELL comes and have the full time to refute what I think are misrepresentations of the Texas record.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator should be advised, there is an agreement to recognize Senator BAUCUS. But subject to that agreement, without objection, the Senator may proceed.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I ask unanimous consent that I have up until the time that the foreign operations bill starts. What is the agreement with Senator BAUCUS?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is an agreement that Senator BAUCUS be recognized with no time limit before the foreign operations bill. However, the Senator is not here at this point.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak until I finish.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, the State of Texas has just surpassed New York as the second largest State in America. That didn't happen because our State wasn't well run. It didn't happen because we have a sorry education system. It didn't happen because we don't take care of our children. It happened because we have a great quality of life. We have a Governor, George W. Bush, who is doing a great job, and we have a legislature led by our Lieutenant Governor, Rick Perry, and our House Speaker, Pete Laney. One is a Democrat; one is a Republican. They work together. That is the way we do things in Texas.

There has been a gross misrepresentation about Texas throughout the campaign for President and on the Senate floor today. I will tell the Senate why the State of Texas is in great shape and why it is absolutely unconscionable to trash Texas in order to get an advantage in the Presidential race.

Let's take education. Everyone would acknowledge that we have a problem in the public education system of our country. Our Congress, the Republicans, and our Governor in Texas have tried to open up our public education system. Governor Bush has tried to take the problems we have and put creativity and more State resources into those problems so that every child will have a chance to reach his or her full potential in our State of Texas. That is what we have tried to do in Congress for the entire United States. We have tried to put creativity into the schools. We have tried to give parents more choices.

Every time we do, however, it is the people on the other side of the aisle

who throw up the roadblocks, who want to have the Federal Government, from the top down, dictate what the local governments and the school boards would do all over our country.

If you think that Governor Bush disagrees with that, you are right. And so do I. He believes in local control. He is very pleased that Congress is going to put more money into public education, but he wants the decisions made by the people who know the children and who know what the children's needs are.

Let me tell you what he has done in Texas. We were very concerned about the high school dropout rate in Texas. It was especially high in our Hispanic community. Governor Bush believes, as do I, that if our young people are dropping out of high school, that is trouble—T-R-O-U-B-L-E—for all of us. It means those children will not have a chance to succeed, and it means our society is losing the benefit of a productive citizen.

Governor Bush said: Let's find out what the problem is. Well, we found out what the problem is. Many of those young people who are dropping out of high school can't read very well. So he said: We are going to attack this so that every child will be able to read at grade level, so that every child will be able to participate in public education all the way through the system. So we start testing our children in Texas in preschool, kindergarten, in the first grade, in the second grade. And in the third grade, the child must read at grade level. The child is tested. And if the child cannot pass the test, the child will not progress to the fourth grade.

That child will be given extra help to learn how to read until that child can read at grade level. Then that child will go to the fourth grade. Governor Bush believes that a child is not going to be able to learn multiplication tables if a child can't read in the third grade. Governor Bush wants to go back to basics in education. He wants reading, writing, arithmetic, and history to be the core subjects that are taught in our schools. That is what he has done in Texas. The test scores are going up, and especially they are going up among our minority students. In fact, we have phenomenal increases in the test scores of our minority students, which is the emphasis we have put in the program, because we are so hopeful that by starting at that third grade level, every child will be able to reach his or her full potential.

Texas is one of two States that has made the greatest recent progress in education according to the congressionally mandated National Education Goals Panel. African American fourth graders in Texas ranked first in the Nation in math. Since 1992, African American fourth graders in Texas have made the greatest gains in math, and Hispanic fourth graders have made the second greatest gains.

African American and Hispanic eighth graders in Texas ranked first

and second in the Nation in writing. Texas eighth graders, as a whole, ranked fourth in the Nation. Under Governor Bush, the number of students passing all parts of the State skills test has increased by 51 percent. The number of both minority students and economically disadvantaged students passing all parts of this test increased by 89 percent.

I think that is a record of which our Governor should be very proud.

We have had problems in our public education system. We have had children who don't speak English in great numbers in our education system. We are a border State. We value education. Our Governor was the first to step up to the line and say we would educate every child in Texas regardless of whether or not that child was a legal resident of Texas. The children of illegal immigrants are educated in Texas, and that is under the leadership of our Governor.

So I think it is very important that we set the record straight because it is a good record. We take care of our children, and we believe a strong system of public education is the ticket to success in our country. We believe Texas is leading the way.

Now the Senator from Massachusetts pointed out that a Federal judge had said we are not doing enough for the children in the insurance program that has been a part of Medicaid. I think that is very interesting because that lawsuit was filed when we had another Governor in Texas, not Governor Bush. That lawsuit was filed when Ann Richards was the Governor of Texas. Governor Bush has been in office for 7 years, so that lawsuit has been pending for over 7 years. I wonder what it was that made Federal Judge William Wayne Justice decide to rule in the last 6 weeks in that case. I wonder why he waited for over 7 years to declare that Texas was not meeting its responsibilities. Furthermore, I wonder why he waited until October 30 to ask for the report from the State—October 30 of an election year in which our Governor is running for President. I just ask that question about the timing.

As a matter of fact, it happens that our State is going to report that they are doing everything they can to cover every child with Medicaid and under the CHIP program because 41 States were not able to meet the 3-year mandate of the CHIP program, for a combination of reasons. Partly, it was regulations put out by the Federal Government that our States had to digest before they would be able to go forward and put the program in place. Our State legislature meets every other year, as do many other State legislatures. So once they met, they put the program in place. Texas has been going full steam ahead ever since that point. Mr. President, 100,000 children are now covered under our CHIP program; 400,000 are expected to be covered by the end of next year.

Under Governor Bush, the percentage of Medicaid-eligible children who get

prevention care has doubled from 30 percent to 60 percent. Congress is going to pass legislation that is going to help all 41 States that haven't been able to get their programs up completely and running, so that all of them will be covered and they will have the money they need, including Texas. So 41 States had to get the program up and going with legislatures that meet every other year. So the States and the Federal Government are working together to make sure children are covered, and our Governor is leading the way.

I want to discuss the Patients' Bill of Rights, which was mentioned by the Senator from Massachusetts. He acted as if we didn't have a Patients' Bill of Rights in Texas. We do have a Patients' Bill of Rights in Texas, and the Governor worked very hard to get that bill passed. The disagreement between the Governor and some of the people in the legislature, which was the subject of the negotiation, was how much the caps on pain and suffering lawsuits would be. The Governor thought they were too high. He didn't veto the bill; he let it go into law. In fact, because he did that, it is the basis of the law that eventually Congress will pass, because it has very clear internal reviews and very clear external reviews and because those reviews are so comprehensive and independent, there have been virtually no lawsuits filed, which is exactly what you want. You want patients to be covered; you want them to get the care they need. You don't want a bunch of lawsuits in which the patient is a person forgotten in the process. You want a Patients' Bill of Rights so that you can get the care and because the internal and external reviews have been so good, the system is working.

It is law in Texas today because Governor Bush was the leader who worked to get those internal and external reviews, who worked to have reasonable caps, who let the bill become law, and who now, I hope, will lead our country to a Patients' Bill of Rights that will not be a lawsuit machine but will give patients and their doctors the ability to make their decisions.

The Senator from Massachusetts said our Governor, in running for the Presidency, has a prescription drug benefit for our elderly, but he said it was "fuzzy." It is not fuzzy. He wants a prescription drug benefit for our elderly people who need it. He wants to do it immediately. He does not want one person to have to decide between a necessity in life and a prescription drug. So he is advocating exactly what we have been trying to do in Congress, which is to get money to the States immediately to help in a transition until we can have a real addressing of the issue of prescription drug benefits. He is advocating an option in Medicare so that every person will have the ability to have coverage, if that is the option the person in Medicare chooses to have—prescription drug benefits—something that would operate like Medicare Part B or Medicare Part C.

I think we should not have to criticize a State in order to make a point in a Presidential race. I don't think the people of America are very persuaded, and if Vice President GORE doesn't have anything else to talk about but the State of Texas, he should not be the leader of our country because I think most people would like to know what Vice President GORE and what Governor Bush are planning to do in the future for our country. I think their platforms are pretty clear. I don't think you have to say that the State of Texas is backward when we have one of the best qualities of life of any State in our Nation, and people are voting with their feet because they are moving to Texas by choice. Texas is a great place to live. We have wonderful people, and we have a legislature that operates in a bipartisan way. I don't think you would hear one of our legislators stand on the floor of the House or Senate and trash another State in order to make a point, because it is just not necessary.

We have a system of public education that is improving every day in Texas. It is under the leadership of Governor Bush that that is happening. We are covering our children in the CHIP program, and our outreach is comprehensive. We are trying to do the education efforts today so that every child who is eligible will know through that child's parents that they are eligible.

We have a Patients' Bill of Rights that is the leader in the Nation for patients in our State, with their doctors having control of their health care. We did it under the leadership of Governor Bush.

Mr. GRAMM. Will the Senator yield?

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I am happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, let me say I have been busy all morning trying to work out our Medicare and Medicaid Improvement Act and work on finalizing actions so we can, hopefully, finish the business of the Senate tomorrow or Friday. I have not had an opportunity to come over, though I understand Senator KENNEDY has gone on at great length talking about Texas.

Let me respond in the following way. There are a lot of States in the Union I wouldn't want to live in. But I know there are people who love those States. I am proud when people ask: What State do you represent in the Senate? I am proud I can say I am a Senator from the greatest State in the Union. I am a Senator from Texas.

Now, Texas does not need defense against TED KENNEDY. The fact that TED KENNEDY is not for George Bush for President is a very good reason to vote for George Bush for President. The fact that TED KENNEDY does not like our Patients' Bill of Rights in Texas is a pretty good indication we have a good Patients' Bill of Rights in Texas. After all, it was TED KENNEDY who joined the Clintons in proposing that the Government take over and run the health care system in America.

I don't have to defend Texas because people vote with their feet. We have

had 321,666 people move from other States to Texas since George Bush has been Governor. They must think things are pretty good in Texas. We have created 1.6 million permanent, productive tax-paying jobs for the future in Texas while George Bush has been Governor. While America has lost manufacturing jobs, we have gained 100,000 manufacturing jobs in Texas. Come to think of it, wouldn't it be great if America were a little bit more like Texas?

I quote from the rules of the Senate, rule XIX, clause 3: No Senator in debate shall refer offensively to any State of the Union.

Now I don't intend to come over and say bad things about Massachusetts. Some great Americans have come from Massachusetts. Massachusetts is a great and wonderful State. I don't choose to live there, but I know the people who live there love it.

It is interesting that we are gaining two congressional seats because so many people are moving to Texas; Massachusetts keeps losing congressional seats. But I am not going to come out here and criticize Massachusetts.

I say to Senator KENNEDY and to others: if you want to run for President, you want to campaign, go out and do it. But I don't think we ought to turn the floor of the Senate into the fulcrum of that campaign.

I thank my colleague for coming over. She does a great job in defending Texas and defending its interests. I am always proud to be associated with her. Texas doesn't need any defending. But obviously the rules of the Senate do. I call on my colleagues to abide by the rules. I don't think we help each other if we try to tear down other people's States. I think it behooves us to try to build up our own States—to try to build up our own country. I think when we do that, the country benefits.

I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I wish to discuss for a moment this Rand report that has been quoted so many times by Senator KENNEDY and others. It seems there are some people in the Rand organization who have put something out showing Texas in a bad light in the education system.

That was not a full study. Rand actually did a full and comprehensive study. It was released July 25 of this year. I will read a few highlights of the comprehensive study. The study examined and compared the results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress Tests taken between 1990 and 1996 among 44 States. They judged the States according to State score improvements, raw achievement scores, and scores comparing students from similar demographic groups.

Results from the Rand study show that math scores in Texas had improved at twice the rate of the national average. Texas was second among all States in improved math scores. Texas leads all States in a comparison of students from similar socioeconomic and family backgrounds. Texas African

Americans and non-Hispanic white fourth graders ranked first on this test in math in 1996. Texas Hispanic fourth graders ranked fifth. The study confirms earlier reports that Texas is one of two States that has made the greatest overall academic gains in recent years.

The report went on to say one reason why Texas has been so successful, according to the Rand study, has been the higher percentage of teachers who are satisfied with their teaching resources. Governor Bush provided those resources. He wants to do the same thing through initiatives such as Reading First, at the Federal level, which would offer training and a curriculum for teaching reading to K-through-12 teachers.

Governor Bush thinks reading is fundamental. I think his mother is the one who started that when she started the Reading First Program for America. He believes if a child can read, that child is going to be able to take the next steps in public education. That is why Governor Bush put the resources there in Texas. That is why the real Rand study that was comprehensive showed the great improvement in Texas. That is why his education plans for America will work because we want no child to be left behind in Texas or any other State.

I hope the campaign rhetoric doesn't hit the Senate floor again. I am not going to stand here and I am not going to sit in my office and listen to anyone else use Texas as a whipping boy, A, because Texas is a great State; B, we have a great Governor; C, the things that are being said are misrepresentations; and D, in Texas, where we have been behind in the past, Governor Bush has said we are going to get ahead.

We are tackling our problems. Every State has problems. I am proud of the leadership in Texas of our Speaker, Pete Laney and our Lieutenant Governor, Rick Perry, and our Governor, George Bush, who have worked together in a bipartisan way to make sure the resources are going into public education and into our children's health insurance program. It was our legislative leaders working with Governor Bush who said our entire State tobacco settlement would go to fund the children's health insurance program, and they took a huge part of our State tobacco settlement and put it in a trust fund in which every county in Texas will participate in perpetuity for the treatment of our indigent health care patients all over Texas. That was the leadership of our State legislature, and our Governor. Because they do want quality health care for all our Texas residents.

Maybe I am a little biased, but I think I come from a very great State. I think the statistics prove it. I do not want to hear anyone else say that Texas is not meeting its responsibilities in education, in health insurance, in patients' rights—because we are a leader. We are a leader and we want ev-

eryone in America to have the quality of public education that we are building to get in Texas. We want every child in America to reach his or her full potential. We want every child to have health insurance coverage. We want every person in Texas to have quality health care. That is why all of our tobacco settlement is going for health care or education programs to educate young people on the hazards of smoking. That is it, that is the entire use of our tobacco money: to educate young people on the hazards of smoking and health care for every citizen of Texas who needs it.

I am very proud of our record. I am proud of our Governor and I think he is the person who can bring these qualities to the United States.

I yield the floor.

#### FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Committee of Conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate on the bill H.R. 4811, "Making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes," having met, have agreed that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment, and the Senate agree to the same, signed by a majority of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report.

(The report was printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of October 24, 2000.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending business is the conference report on the foreign operations bill.

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. Speaker, the bill before the Senate is a half billion dollars below last year's appropriation—the fiscal year 2000 bill was \$15.4 billion—this year we are presenting a \$14.9 billion bill. This includes \$14.5 billion in fiscal year 2000 funds plus an additional \$466 million in supplemental funding for debt relief, Southern Africa, and the Balkans.

Although we are below last year's level, we have managed to substantially increase key priorities, including providing \$865 million for Ex-Im, a nearly \$100 million increase over last year, \$1.3 billion for development assistance, again a \$100 million increase, within child survival we surpassed the request for AIDS funding and provided \$315 million. Overall child survival funding was also increased to \$963 million. In addition to over \$1 billion in

supplemental funds for Colombia, the Narcotics and Law enforcement account was increased by \$20 million over the request to \$325 million. For the first time in years, we managed to increase security assistance. This account is of real concern to our friends and allies in Central and Eastern Europe. We exceeded the request and provided \$3.545 billion. To respond to crises from Chechnya to Sierra Leone, we substantially increased funding both over last year's level and this year's request for refugees to \$700 million. In this account we were able to work out a compromise that will improve management and oversight of UNHCR while affording the administration flexibility to respond rapidly to any real emergency.

Finally, we provided funds for the fiscal year 2001 and the supplemental request for debt relief. In addition to language on IMF reforms recommended by Senator GRAMM, we have included a number of HIPC conditions worked out between Senator HELMS and Congressman LEACH, representing the authorizing committees. There are a number of policy provisions which are also important to mention. Within the \$675 million account for Eastern Europe, we have provided up to \$100 million for Serbia. Senator LEAHY and I agree that we will never be able to withdraw troops and help stabilize the Balkans as long as Milosevic and other criminals responsible for outrageous atrocities across the Balkans are allowed to go free. No government in the region will have confidence in Belgrade if the rule of law is not upheld.

The administration lobbied heavily against our arguments that U.S. support for the new government should come with specific conditions attached. We thought aid should flow only if the Serb government met three specific conditions: First, they need to cooperate with the War Crimes Tribunal. Second, they must take steps to end support for organizations in the Republic of Srpska which prevent effective integration of Bosnia Hercegovina. Finally, given Belgrade's vicious track record, we thought it was important to seek assurances that the new government will implement policies which respect the rights and aspirations of minorities and the rule of law. Each of these conditions was designed to serve our interests in stabilizing the region so that an exit strategy for U.S. troops can be safely and effectively executed. The bill modifies this approach and includes an agreement which will give this administration and the new government in Belgrade a 5-month window in which assistance can move forward. After that period, only humanitarian aid and support to local mayors will be allowed if Belgrade refuses to meet the conditions which I have outlined.

I must confess my reservations about this approach. I listened to the arguments for flexibility, but I have little confidence in the administration's past record of support for the Tribunal and